

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Upon entry of this amendment, which amends claims 1, 3, and 8, and cancels claims 7 and 9, claims 1-6, and 8 will be pending. In the Office Action, claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ladd et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,269,336, hereinafter "Ladd"); and claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ladd in view of Neubauer (U.S. Patent No. 6,269,095). Claims 7-8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if written in independent form, including limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

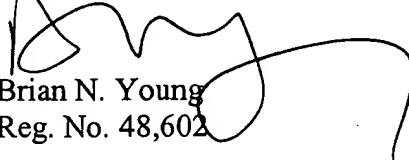
Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. Although applicants believe that claims 1-9 are allowable over the cited art, applicants have amended claims 1 and 8, and canceled claim 9 to expedite prosecution. Applicants will prosecute original claims 1-9 in a continuation application. Accordingly, applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 7. Thus, claims 1-6 are allowable. Moreover, applicants have amended claim 8 to include the limitations of claim 1 and thus claim 8 is allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,


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